Department of State

[Public Notice   ]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for

Grant Proposals: FY-2014 American Serbia and Montenegro Youth

Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE) Program: Host Family and School

Placement and Monitoring

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAPEC-14-003

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.415

Application Deadline: October 11, 2013

Executive Summary: The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau

of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) announces an open

competition for cooperative agreements for the FY-2014 American

Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE)

Program: Host Family and School Placement and Monitoring

Component, to promote mutual understanding between the United

States and the countries of Serbia and Montenegro. The A-SMYLE

program provides scholarships for high school students to live

in American society for an academic year. In turn, these

students will expose U.S. citizens to the culture, traditions,

and lifestyles of people in Serbia and Montenegro. Public and

private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions

described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) are

invited to submit proposals to identify host schools; vet, select, and monitor host families; and place and monitor students participating in the A-SMYLE program during the 2014-15 academic year.

Applicants may submit only one proposal under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared ineligible and receive no further consideration in the review process. It is the Bureau's intent to award one or more cooperative agreements (one base year plus one option year) for an estimated total amount of up to $1,020,000 to support approximately 134 A-SMYLE students. Please see section II. Award Information, below for additional details.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Authority: Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other

nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

Purpose: The A-SMYLE program seeks to provide high school students from Serbia and Montenegro with an opportunity to live in the United States for the purpose of promoting mutual understanding between our countries. Programmatic activities will introduce students to youth leadership, civic education, civil society, and community service. The goals of the Department of State's Academic Year Youth Exchanges are to promote mutual understanding and foster relationships between the people of the United States and other countries. The youth exchange programs accomplish this goal by enabling students to:

- Gain an understanding of American culture, diversity, and respect for others with differing views and beliefs;
- Develop a sense of civic responsibility and commitment to community development;

- Foster relationships with youth from different ethnic, religious, and national groups;

- Develop leadership qualities they will need to lead their countries;

- Teach Americans about their home countries and cultures;

- Interact with Americans and generate enduring ties; and

- Share and apply experiences and knowledge in their home communities as alumni, initiating activities that focus on development and community service.

This solicitation refers to A-SMYLE students between the ages of 15 and 17 from Serbia and Montenegro. Qualified organizations may submit proposals to administer this cooperative agreement.

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to adjust the participating countries should conditions change in a partner country or if other countries and/or regions are identified as Department priorities. The number of students who will participate is subject to the availability of funding

in fiscal year 2014; it is anticipated that there will be approximately 67 A-SMYLE students.

The responsibilities of the Placement Components awardees are described in detail in the accompanying Program Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document. In general, the award recipient will be expected to:

- Recruit, screen, and select U.S. host families for A-SMYLE participants;
- Select schools and secure school enrollments for A-SMYLE participants;
- Conduct in-person host family and student community based orientations;
- Monitor and support students throughout the school year; and
- Organize enhancement activities for students.

Approximate Timeline:
- February 2014: Cooperative Agreements awarded, pending the availability of FY14 funds; start of academic year 2014-15 cycle.

- Spring 2014: Distribution of student applications by Organizational Component grantee

- Spring 2014: Recruitment of host schools and families

- June-July 2014: Pre-departure Orientations conducted by Organizational Component grantee overseas

- July – August 2014: Students begin to arrive in groups

- Late August 2014: All final placement information (host family names and addresses, confirmed school enrollments) to be submitted to Department of State

- July-September 2014: Post-Arrival Orientations for students

- January-February 2014: Mid-Year Orientations for students

- February 2015: First (and ONLY) Option Year exercised, pending performance and the availability of funds in FY15; start of academic year 2015-16 cycle

- Spring 2015: ECA may arrange one or more enhancement workshops for competitively selected A-SMYLE students; placement organizations should encourage students to apply for participation and should facilitate their participation if selected.

- June 2015: Re-entry Orientations and departure of students

- August 31, 2016: Cooperative Agreement end date

Other Components: The A-SMYLE Program also includes an Organizational Component, Disability Component, and Civic Education Component. Additional information on these components is provided in the POGI.

Guidelines: Applicants are requested to submit a narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy for the administration and implementation of the Placement Component of the A-SMYLE program that includes the responsibilities outlined in the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document and in accordance with the J-1 Visa regulations set forth in the 22 CFR 62: http://www.ecfr.gov.

An organization must be able to dedicate key staff to this program who possess a thorough understanding of the secondary school student Exchange Visitor (J-1 Visa) Program regulations.

If you are applying to place A-SMYLE students, your proposal must include a plan to place and monitor a minimum of 30 students. An organization wishing to place fewer than 30 students may do so as a sub-awardee to an organization applying for a cooperative agreement. In such a case, the lead awardee

must explain in its proposal how it will provide mentoring, training, oversight, and additional monitoring of students placed by its sub-awardees.

Placements may be in any region of the United States. Strong preference will be given to organizations that choose to place participants in clusters of at least three students (these students should be from different countries) in a particular Local Coordinator's area of responsibility. Please refer to the POGI for details on essential program elements and permissible costs. We anticipate cooperative agreements beginning in February 2014, subject to the availability of FY14 funds.

Participants will begin to arrive in their host communities in late July 2014 and remain for 10 or 11 months until their departure in late June 2015. Students with disabilities will be among the first to arrive.

Administration of the program must be in compliance with federal, state, and local tax reporting and withholding regulations as applicable. Recipient organizations must demonstrate regulation adherence in the proposal narrative and budget.

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ECA Activities and Responsibilities: In a cooperative
agreement, ECA is substantially involved in program activities
above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA activities and
responsibilities for the A-SMYLE program include:

1) Providing advice and assistance in the execution of all
   program components.

2) Serving as liaison between the award recipients and
   personnel within the Department of State, including ECA,
   the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.

3) Monitoring and evaluating the program and its participants
   through communication by email, phone, and site visits.

4) Issuing DS-2019 forms for the participants. All
   participants will travel on a U.S. government designation
   for the J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program.

5) Creating and updating SEVIS status; maintaining all SEVIS
   records.

6) Hosting an annual meeting for all award recipients to
   provide program guidance.

7) Approving program promotional materials and website
   information.

8) Representing the U.S. Government as the program sponsor at
   exchange events, program events, and orientations.

9) Publicizing program highlights and responding to

    Congressional and Department requests for information.

10)   Performing an annual performance evaluation/review.

    Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued

    administration of the program and execution of an option

    year.

Proposal narratives should include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus one additional option year, pending successful performance and availability of funds.   The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration, and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent option year is exercised.

II. Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under Section I above.

Fiscal Year Funds: 2014 – base year, 2015 – option year one, pending successful performance and availability of funds.

Approximate Total Funding: Up to $1,020,000. This figure represents base year plus one option year, pending successful performance and availability of funds.

Approximate Number of Awards: One or more cooperative agreements

Approximate Average Award: Funding level is dependent on the number of proposed students, monitoring, the quality of support, and volume of activities

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of FY14 funds, February 1, 2014

Anticipated Project Completion Date: August 31, 2016. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – one base year plus one option year.

Additional Information: Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, cooperative agreement(s) will be awarded from approximately February 1, 2014 through August 31, 2015 (base year) with the option for one additional 12-month period (option year one). ECA will notify the recipient of our intention to exercise or not to exercise the option year approximately 9 months following the initial award date after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise the option year will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient and the availability of funds.

III. Eligibility Information:

III.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 -

Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event you do not provide the
minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved
budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

III.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with fewer
than four years experience in conducting international exchanges
be limited to $130,000 in Bureau funding. Since an award to
support program and administrative costs required to implement
this exchange program for a minimum of 30 students will exceed
$130,000, organizations with fewer than four years experience in
conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under
this competition. The Bureau encourages applicants to provide
maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its
programs. Your organization may, however, seek another
qualified applicant and serve as its sub-awardee under a
proposal submitted by that organization if you would like to
place fewer than 30 students and your total budget is less than
$130,000.

 IV. Application and Submission Information: Please read the
complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting
proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may

not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal
review process has been completed.

IV.1. Contact Information to Request an Application Package:

Please contact the Youth Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5,
Floor 3, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20037,
telephone (202) 632-6052, fax (202) 632-9355, or e-mail
SchulzAJ@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please
refer to Funding Opportunity Number ECA-ECAPEC-14-003
 (as listed at the top of this announcement) when making your
request.

Alternatively, an electronic application package may be obtained
from Grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for further
information.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission
Instruction (PSI) document, which consists of required
application forms and standard guidelines for proposal
preparation. It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and
Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific
information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to
this competition.

Please specify Amy Schulz and refer to the Funding Opportunity

Number (ECA-ECAPEC-14-003) located at the top of this

announcement on all inquiries and correspondence.

IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package via the Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the

Bureau's website at http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding

or from the Grants.gov website at http://www.grants.gov.

Please read all information before downloading.

IV.3. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow

all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application

should be submitted per the instructions under IV.3f.

Application Deadline and Methods of Submission section below.

IV.3a. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data

Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or

cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is

a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies

business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is

no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access

http://www.dunandbradstreet.com or call 1-866-705-5711. Please

ensure that your DUNS number is included in the appropriate box

of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package.

IV.3b.   All proposals must contain an executive summary,

proposal narrative, budget and budget narrative.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the

mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document and

the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document

for additional formatting and technical requirements.

IV.3c. All federal award recipients must maintain current

registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) database.

Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in

SAM until all program and financial activity and reporting have

been completed. Recipients must review and update the

information at least annually after the initial registration and

more frequently if required information changes or another award

is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants

ineligible to receive funding.

You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways: 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form. 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of cooperative agreement activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management

and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA
reporting requirements.

If your organization is a private nonprofit that has not
received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past
three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status
from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the
necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed
in the PSI document. If you fail to include this documentation,
your proposal will be declared technically ineligible.

IV.3d.   All ECA awards recipient organizations must be
registered with GrantSolutions by accessing
www.GrantSolutions.gov. To register as a first time user of
GrantSolutions, please scroll to the bottom of the home page and
click "Getting Started-Request a User Account" at
http://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/home/customer-
support/getting-started/. Organizations that have previously
used GrantSolutions do not need to register again. If the
organization is not able to access the system, please contact
GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Grantee Organizations is available from 8 AM – 6 PM
EST, Monday – Friday and can be reached at
help@grantsolutions.gov or 1-866-577-0771.

Please take into consideration the following information when
preparing your proposal narrative:

IV.3d.1. Adherence to All Regulations Governing the J-1 Visa

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and
Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange
program covered by this RFGP, and an employee of the Bureau will
be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of
22 CFR 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange
Visitor Program (J-1Visa). Under the terms of 22 CFR 62,
organizations receiving awards (either a grant or cooperative
agreement) under this RFGP will be third parties "cooperating
with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's
program." The actions of recipient organizations shall be
"imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance
with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any
organization receiving an award under this competition will
render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully
comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J-1Visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J-1Visa program. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of J-1 Visa programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated J-1 Visa program sponsor, you should discuss your record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements. ECA will review the record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et seq. of applicant organizations designated as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors by ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange as one factor in evaluating the record/ability of organizations to carry out successful exchange programs.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at http://j1visa.state.gov or from: Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Suite 668, 301 4th Street, SW

Washington, DC 20547.

IV.3d.2. Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and disabilities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the "Support for Diversity" section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into your proposal. Public Law 104-319 provides that

"in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

Funds provided through this award may not be used to promote participation in, or to purchase equipment or supplies intended for, activities related to religious worship or proselytization. Host families, school officials, and placement organizations shall not require program participants to attend religious services. However, as part of their exchange experience, participants may be offered the opportunity to take part voluntarily in this facet of their host culture, at their own discretion. Volunteer host families (who receive no financial benefit from cooperative agreement funds) are encouraged to enable participants living with them to attend services of the participant's religion, if the participant so desires and the

services are available within a reasonable distance of the host

family's residence.

IV.3d.3. Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Program Monitoring includes Participant Monitoring, which

focuses specifically on ensuring students' safety and well-being

throughout the year; see Review Criterion #5 for details and

instructions. This section focuses on other aspects of Program

Monitoring.

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the

project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end

of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal

include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a

description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original

project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient

organization will track participants or partners and be able to

respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with

the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in

behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program

on institutions (institutions in which participants work or

partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include

indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as

substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting
clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your
evaluation plan should include a description of your project's
objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when
you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators).
The more that outcomes are "SMART" (specific, measurable,
attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time
frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You
should also show how your project objectives link to the goals
of the program described in this RFGP.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish
between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and
services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output
information is important to show the scope or size of project
activities, but it cannot substitute for information about
progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of
outputs include the number of people trained or the number of
seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific
results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured

as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate
timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For
example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term
outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally
considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will
be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2)
gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured;
3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4)
provides a clear description of the data collection strategies
for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups).
(Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first
level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive
under the present evaluation criteria.)

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports
analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their
regular program reports. All data collected, including survey
responses and contact information, must be maintained for a
minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

IV.3d.4. Virtual Exchange Component: ECA welcomes innovative

ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile
and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange
participants, encourage project collaboration and widen
participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA
strongly encourages organizations submitting proposals in
response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual
exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The
virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or
after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual
exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled,
sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to
augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this
solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual
exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and
social networking platforms, including our International
Exchange Alumni space. Virtual exchange components would be
coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S.
missions abroad on a project by project basis.

IV.3e. Please consider the following information when preparing
your budget: Applicants must submit SF-424A – "Budget
Information – Non-Construction Programs" along with a
comprehensive budget for the entire program. The budget must

reflect costs for a minimum of 30 participants. Please indicate

clearly the number of students funded. There must be a summary

budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and

program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for

each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide

clarification. Proposals that demonstrate low costs per

participant will be deemed more competitive.

For competitions that will be renewed through the option year,

applicants must submit:

1. the SF-424A, which must include the budget request amount

   for the base-year of the program;

2. a detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year

   of funding. (Please refer to the Proposal Submission

   Instruction Document (PSI) for general budget

   guidance.) The narrative should also include a brief

   commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus

   one additional option year, pending successful program

   performance and availability of funds; and

3. an abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the

   total projected administrative and program costs for the

   anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus

   one option year).

To exercise the option year mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:

1. timely quarterly performance and financial reports;

2. a request in writing to ECA no later than 9 months following the initial award date;

3. a summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year;

4. a detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested option year; and

5. a brief narrative to support the continuation of the award.

The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:

1. closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, mandatory quarterly performance and financial reports, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising the additional option year. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)

2. review and evaluate all mandatory quarterly program and financial reports:

a. All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up-to-date before the Bureau will exercise the additional option year.

b. Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications to the original program design or method of implementation requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer must be responded to in writing.

c. The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing the subsequent option year.

All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up-to-date before the Bureau will exercise the additional option year.

Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.

IV.3e.2. Any/all sub-awards/agreements including accompanying budgets required to accomplish overall program objectives described herein, shall be submitted with the proposal package

and must be approved by the Grants Officer, prior to commencement.

IV.3e.3. Any/all sub-award budgets must be submitted in similar detail and format as the overall budget to allow complete and consistent review and justification. A single line total within an overall budget representing a complex activity, for example, is insufficient; sub-awards representing activity similar to that done by the lead award recipient or other sub-recipient must be presented with comparable budget formats, representing similar cost fields.

Allowable costs for the program and additional budget guidance are outlined in detail in the POGI document. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

IV.3f. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: October 11, 2013

Reference Number: ECA-ECAPEC-14-003

Methods of Submission

Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov). Complete solicitation

packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of
the system.

Along with the Project Title, all applicants must enter the
above Reference Number in Box 11 on the SF-424 contained in the
mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) of the
solicitation document.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant
timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from
transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via
Grants.gov. Please follow the instructions available in the
"Get Started" portion of the site
(http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process
could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check
with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately
after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their
registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an
application will vary depending on a variety of factors

including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.) EST of the closing
date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded
to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above
deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of
the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by
the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website for definitions of
various "application statuses" and the difference between a
submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will
receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful
submission of an application. Again, validation of an
electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business
days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until
the application deadline to begin the submission process through
Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic
applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals
via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been
received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no

responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

IV.3g. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Review Process

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. In addition, ECA will review the record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et seq. of applicant organizations designated as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors by ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange. If it is determined that an applicant organization submitting a proposal has a record of not being in compliance, their proposal will be deemed technically ineligible and receive no further consideration in the review process. If the organization is in compliance, the applicant organization's record of compliance will be used as one factor in evaluating the record/ability of organizations to carry out successful exchange programs.

All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

V.2 Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Program Objectives**: The Program Narrative should exhibit originality, substance, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Reviewers will assess the degree to which proposals engage participants in community activities that involve skills development and leadership

training. Proposals should incorporate strategies that
creatively utilize local resources to ensure an efficient use
of program funds. A detailed agenda and work plan should
adhere to all guidelines described in the solicitation
package. Reviewers will also assess the degree to which the
proposed outcomes of the project are realistic and
measurable.

2. **Support of Diversity**: Proposals should demonstrate
   substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. It
   is a goal of the Department to ensure that all funded
   programs reflect the diversity of American society. Describe
   your plans to promote this goal in the selection of host
   families and in the local enhancement programming.
   Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both
   program administration (e.g., selection of participants' host
   families and schools, program venue, and program evaluation)
   and program content (e.g., orientations, program meetings,
   enhancement programming, resource materials, and follow-up
   activities).

3. **Placement Organization's Record/Institutional Capacity:**
   Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be

adequate and appropriate to achieve the Program's goals and outcomes. Reviewers will assess the applicant and its partners, if any, to determine if they offer adequate resources, expertise, and experience to fulfill program objectives. Partner activities should be clearly defined. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with reporting and J-1 Visa regulatory requirements. Past performance of recipients will be considered. For new applicants, proposals should demonstrate capacity to participate in the Program. In addition, organizations designated as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors must include a discussion of their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements. Proposals that fail to include the above information in their narrative will be deemed less or not competitive under this review criterion. ECA will review the record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et seq. of organizations designated as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors as one factor in evaluating the record/ability of organizations to carry

out successful exchange programs.

4. **Multiplier Effect:** Proposals should describe how you will
   strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum
   sharing of information and establishment of long-term
   institutional and individual linkages. Reviewers will assess
   ways in which proposals include innovative ideas to expose
   American communities to A-SMYLE program-related goals and
   activities that involve students, host families, and schools.
   This includes media outreach, visits to local and national
   government representatives, Internet-based applications and
   other interactions. Reviewers will also evaluate substantive
   plans to prepare participants for their role as active,
   effective alumni.

5. **Participant Monitoring:** Proposals must include a detailed
   monitoring plan which addresses Student, Local Coordinator
   (LC), and Host Family (HF) monitoring. Given the importance
   the Department places on this criterion, you should dedicate
   a significant percentage of the narrative to explaining how
   you will achieve the Department's goals in regard to
   monitoring the health, safety, and welfare of program
   participants. You may use the appendices to house additional

details and supporting documentation.

6. **Program Evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan to
   evaluate the program component's success, both as the
   activities unfold and at the end of the program. Evaluation
   should include outputs and outcomes, as described above, and
   describe how program success will be determined through
   stated criteria. Reviewers will assess your plans to monitor
   student progress and program activities, particularly in
   regard to intended outcomes indicated in your proposal.
   Award recipients will be expected to submit quarterly
   reports, which should be included as an integral component of
   the work plan.

7. **Cost-effectiveness/Cost sharing:** Reviewers will analyze
   proposed budgets for clarity and cost-effectiveness. They
   will also assess the rationale of the proposed budget and
   whether the allocation of funds is appropriate to complete
   tasks outlined in the Program Narrative. The overhead and
   administrative components of the program, including salaries
   and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other
   items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should
   maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as

well as institutional direct funding contributions.

Preference will be given to organizations whose proposals

demonstrate a quality, cost-effective program.

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1. Award Notices:

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated

by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau

procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal

Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA

and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if

applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document

between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be

signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and mailed to the

recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results

of the application review from the ECA program office

coordinating this competition.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements

include the following:

- Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

- Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions."

- OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments."

- OMB Circular No. A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

- OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

- OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants

http://fa.statebuy.state.gov

VI.3. Reporting Requirements

You must provide ECA with an electronic copy the following reports:

Mandatory:

1) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The performance reports (PPR) must be submitted electronically to the Grants Office at reportseca@state.gov with a copy sent to the Program Officer. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: http://www.dpm.psc.gov/ . Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.

2) A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all program performance reports, including the SF-PPR-E and SF-PPR-F.

3) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days
   after the expiration or termination of the award;

4) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing
   program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration
   of the award. This one-page report will be transmitted to
   OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's
   USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding
   Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting
   requirements.

5) If the Competition will allow for the exercise of Option
   Years, applicants must be placed on a mandatory quarterly
   program and financial reporting cycle. The due dates for
   these reports will be included in the final assistance
   award document. The program and financial reports must
   demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress
   towards the original approved goals and objectives,
   relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data.
   The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant
   Officer and Program Officer.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing

their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program

reports. (Please refer to IV. Application and Submission

Instructions (IV.3.d.3) above for Program Monitoring and
Evaluation information.) All data collected, including survey
responses and contact information, must be maintained for a
minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

All reports must be sent to the ECA Grants Officer and ECA
Program Officer listed in the final assistance award document.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Amy Schulz
(SchulzAJ@state.gov, 202-632-6052), Office of Citizen Exchanges,
ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5, Floor 3, Department of State, Washington, DC
20037. All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP
should reference the above title and number ECA-ECAPEC-14-003.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries
or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed,
Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants
until the proposal review process has been completed.

VIII. Other Information:

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

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Lee Satterfield   Date

Deputy Assistant Secretary

Professional and Cultural Exchanges

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State